In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 14 and 15 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1-5, 9-10, and 12-13.

Please add claims 16-35.

1. (amended) In an apparatus for a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle, a housing having a proximal and a distal end and surrounding said needle, a frame, an apparatus for securing said housing to said frame comprising:

(a) A hollow receiving piece having a proximal and a distal end, said proximal end attached to said frame and said distal end protruding from said frame, said distal end threaded externally and tapered internally;

(b) A ferrule removably seated in said distal end of said receiving piece;

(c) A compression nut removably screwed onto said external threading of said distal end of said receiving piece, said compression nut tightened against said ferrule and said receiving piece such that said ferrule is compressed thereby retaining said housing in said hollow receiving piece.

~~and a frame, a means of securing said housing to said frame comprising:~~

~~a nut;~~

~~a ferrule; and~~

~~a receiving piece.~~

2. (amended) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said housing is inserted in said hollow receiving piece, said ferrule encircles said housing ~~tube~~, abuts said receiving piece, and is adapted to compress, thereby retaining said housing as said nut is tightened onto said receiving piece.

3. (amended) The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said receiving piece is a removable hollow rod having threads on its external surface adapted at said distal end to receive threads disposed on the internal surface of said nut, and said proximal end to engage threads in a hole in said frame.

4. (amended) The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said receiving piece is ~~a tapped hole in said frame.~~cast as an integral component of said frame.

5. (amended) The apparatus of Claim 3 wherein said ferrule is a split ring ~~with~~having two edges and an external surface which tapers down from a central highpoint ~~to the outer~~ towards said edges of said ferrule.

6. (previously added) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein said ferrule is metal.

7. (previously added) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein said metal is one of brass, aluminum, steel, or iron.

8. (previously added) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein said ferrule is compressible thereby reducing the interior diameter of said ferrule.

9. (amended) A tube vice frame apparatus in a tattoo machine comprising:
   (a) A~~a~~ hollow threaded cylinder extending from a frame;
   (b) A~~a~~ split ferrule having two ends and tapered at both of said ends and removably abutting an ~~the~~ interior surface of said cylinder;
   (c) A~~a~~ tube passing through said cylinder and projecting from an active end ~~extending towards the active end~~ of said tattoo machine and disposed about a needle bar adapted to reciprocate within said tube; and
   (d) A~~a~~ compression nut removably tightened against said ferrule and said cylinder such that said ferrule is compressed thereby retaining said tube in place.

10. (amended) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said cylinder is a hollow rod removablye screwed into said frame.

11. (previously added) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said threaded cylinder is integral to said frame.

12. (amended) A modular tube vice frame kit for tattoo machines comprising the following components: at least one elongated, hollow, and externally threaded cylinderrical piece with a tapered internal surface, at least one split ring with smooth internal and external surfaces and beveled ends, and at least one nut adapted to screw onto said cylindrical piece, ~~cylinder~~ thereby compressing said split ring to grip a tube adapted to house at least one needle and inserted within said cylindrical piece such that an operator may select components of desired size and assemble said kit.

13. (amended) A method of manufacturing a screw tight tube vice frame in a tattoo machine comprising the steps of:

(a) Ddrilling an internal taper into a hollow rod and cutting threads onto the exterior surface of said rod;

(b) Ddrilling a first hole into a tattoo machine frame but not completely through said frame, such that a portion of said frame remains;

(c) Ddrilling a second hole of a smaller diameter than said first hole through the remaining portion of said frame using the same centerline as said first hole, such that there is a transverse hole in said frame;

(d) Ttapping said first hole;

(e) Sscrewing said rod into said first hole such that said rod protrudes from said frame;

(f) Mmachining a split ring ferrule with tapered ends of an angle equivalent to said internal taper of said rod;

(g) Mmachining ~~providing~~ a nut adapted to screw onto said rod with said ferrule between said rod and said nut such that said ferrule may be compressed by said nut to retain objects disposed within said ferrule.

~~14. (canceled) The method of Claim 13 wherein said frame is cast.~~

~~15. (canceled) The method of Claim 13 wherein said frame is cut using a computer controlled mill.~~

16. (new) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein said ferrule has an external and an internal surface, both of said surfaces being smooth.

17. (new) In an apparatus for a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle, a hollow tube having a proximal and a distal end surrounding said needle adapted to act as a finger grip, and a frame, an apparatus for securing said tube to said frame comprising:

(a) A hollow cylindrical receiving piece having a first and second end and threads on an external surface attached to said frame at said first end and having a tapered lip on an internal surface at said second end and adapted to receive said tube;

(b) A hollow split ring ferrule having two ends and both a smooth internal and external surface, said external surface which tapers down towards said ends from a central highpoint and removably seated in said second end of said receiving piece and disposed about said tube; and

(c) A compression nut having an internal, threaded surface and an internal taper, said nut encircling said tube and removably screwed onto said external surface of said receiving piece, said internal taper abutting said ferrule thereby compressing said ferrule against said tube and retaining said tube against said frame.

18. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said hollow threaded rod is removably attached to said frame.

19. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said ferrule is composed of malleable metal.

20. (new) The apparatus of Claim 19 wherein said malleable metal is brass.

21. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said ferrule is tapered from each end to a central high point about the mid circumference of said ferrule.

22. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said ferrule compresses as pressure is applied to the tapered ends such that the internal diameter of said ferrule is reduced and the split is gradually reduced as said pressure is applied.

23. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said tapered ends of said ferrule are machined to the same angle as the taper on the interior surface of said receiving piece, such that a mirrored mating surface is created between said ferrule and said receiving piece.

24. (new) The apparatus of Claim 18 wherein said receiving piece is screwed into a threaded hole in said frame and protrudes between 1/4" and 3/4" from an active end of said frame.

25. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said receiving piece is cast as an integral part of said frame.

26. (new) The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein said receiving piece is machined as part of said frame.

27. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said nut is removeably attached to said receiving piece by clockwise threads thereby compressing and locking said ferrule about said tube.

28. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said nut has interior threads of the same pitch as those on said exterior surface of said receiving piece.

29. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said nut has a gnarled, textured exterior surface to provide a grip to an operator of said tattoo machine.

30. (new) The apparatus of Claim 23 wherein said internal taper of said nut matches that of said ferrule.

31. (new) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said frame, said ferrule, said compression nut and said receiving piece are manufactured from a malleable metal.

32. (new) The apparatus of Claim 31 wherein said metal is brass.

33. (new) A method for disassembling an apparatus for securing a tube to a frame of a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle having a distal end and a proximal end, an armature bar removably attached to said distal end of said needle, a tube surrounding said needle, a tube grip surrounding said tube and attached by at least one set screw to said tube, a bracket attached to said frame, a hollow cylindrical receiving piece attached to said bracket, a split ring ferrule having two edges and a smooth external surface which tapers down from a central highpoint to the two said edges of said ferrule, and a nut, comprising the steps of:

(a) Removing said set screw,

(b) Removing said tube grip,

(c) Unscrewing said nut thereby decompressing said ferrule,

(d) Removing said ferrule,

(e) Removing said tube from said frame,

(f) Removing said needle from said armature bar,

thereby removing said tube in an undamaged state.

34. (new) A method for assembling a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle having a distal end and a proximal end, an armature bar removably attached to the distal end of said needle, a tube surrounding said needle, a tube grip surrounding said tube and attached by at least one set screw, a bracket attached to said frame, a hollow cylindrical receiving piece attached to said bracket, a split ring ferrule having two edges and a smooth external surface which tapers down from a central highpoint to the two said edges of said ferrule, and a nut, comprising the steps of:

(a) Inserting said needle through said bracket and said proximal end of said needle is attached to said armature bar,

(b) Installing said tube over the distal end of said needle bar and abutting said frame,

(c) Sliding said ferrule over said tube and into a hollow interior of said receiving piece to seat,

(d) Tightening said nut onto said receiving piece such that said tapers contact and slide over each other thereby creating pressure evenly around the circumference of said tapers on the circumference of said ferrule thereby compressing said ferrule against said tube thereby retaining said tube against said frame,

(e) Sliding said tube grip over said tube,

thereby compressing and said slit in said ferrule and creating a squeezing effect thereby securing said tube to said frame without bending or crimping said tube.

35. (new) A method of manufacturing a screw tight tube vice frame in a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle having a distal end and a proximal end, an armature bar removably attached to the distal end of said needle, a tube surrounding said needle, a tube grip surrounding said tube and attached by at least one set screw, a bracket attached to said frame, a hollow cylindrical receiving piece attached to said bracket, a split ring ferrule having two edges and a smooth external surface which tapers down from a central highpoint to the two said edges of said ferrule, and a nut, comprising the steps of:

(a) Machining an internal taper into the front entrance of said receiving piece, starting at the outside diameter and machining inwards to a depth of between 1/16" and 1/4".

(b) Tapering said receiving piece internally to the same degree as said compression ferrule to allow said receiving piece to house said ferrule.